

A School Counseling Program Is...

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- What Is a School Counseling Program?
- A Cooperative Effort
- Benefits of a School Counseling Program

What Is a School Counseling Program?

A school counseling program is comprehensive in scope, preventative in design, and developmental in nature. This *Idaho School Counseling Model: A Framework for Comprehensive Programs*, which is adapted from *The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*®, is written to reflect a comprehensive approach to program foundation, delivery, management, and accountability. School counseling programs are designed to ensure that every student receives program benefits. Historically, many professional school counselors spent much of their time responding to the needs of a small percentage of students, typically the high achieving or high risk. Like the *ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs*®, this *Idaho School Counseling Model* recommends that the majority of the professional school counselor's time be spent in direct services to all students so that every student receives maximum benefits from the program.

Comprehensive in Scope

A comprehensive school counseling program will focus on what all students, from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, should know, understand and be able to do in these three domain areas: academic and professional-technical development, life and career development, and personal and social development. The emphasis is on academic success for every student, not just those students who are motivated, supported and ready to learn. The school counseling program helps all students achieve success in school and develop into contributing members of our society.

Preventative in Design

By attending to school data, professional school counselors working with administrators and other educators can assist with early identification of all students or groups of students who are not achieving at the same levels as their peers. Professional school counselors are in the ideal position to advocate for students who need more time, more supports, and more services. Professional school counselors can also deliver counseling and guidance curriculum ranging from bullying prevention and intervention to suicide prevention to

dating violence awareness before such issues appear as a crisis.

Developmental in Nature

Professional school counselors design programs and services to meet the needs of students at various growth and developmental stages. School counseling programs establish goals, expectations, support systems and experiences for all students. They provide the rationale for stakeholders to engage in conversations about expectations for students' academic success and the role of counseling programs in enhancing student learning.

The *Idaho School Counseling Model* standards for students are public statements of what students should know and be able to do as a result of participating in a school counseling program in Idaho.

The Idaho Model, like the ASCA National Model:

1. Establishes the school counseling program as an integral component of the academic and professional-technical mission of a school.
2. Ensures equitable access to the school counseling program for all students provided by a professional school counselor.
3. Identifies the knowledge and skills all students should acquire as a result of the K-12 school counseling program.
4. Ensures the school counseling program is comprehensive in design and delivered in a systematic approach to all students.

Each student standard is followed by student competencies and lists of indicators identifying desired student learning outcomes. Student competencies (see Appendix pp. define the specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills students should obtain or demonstrate as a result of participating in a school counseling program. **These competency listings are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor are any individual programs expected to include all of the**

competencies in the school counseling program. The competencies offer a foundation for what a standards-based program addresses and delivers. These can be used as a basis to measure student development.

Standards for **academic and professional development** provide the school counseling program the strategies and activities to support and maximize student learning. Academic and professional development standards include acquiring attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the life span. Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of postsecondary options. Students will achieve success in school and understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community.

Standards for **life and career development** provide the school counseling program the foundation for the acquisition of skills, attitudes and knowledge that enable students to make successful life transitions. Life and career development standards include the employment of strategies to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions. Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction, and understand the relationship between personal qualities, training, and the world of work.

Standards for **personal and social development** provide the school counseling program the foundation for personal and social growth as students progress through school and into adulthood. Personal and social development contributes to the knowledge, attitudes, and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others. Students will make decisions, set goals, and take necessary action to achieve goals, and understand safety and survival skills.

Integral Part of the Total Educational Program

The *Idaho School Counseling Model*, like the *American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model*[®], supports a school's academic mission by promoting and enhancing the learning process for all students through an integration of academic and professional-technical development, life and career development, and personal and social development. The *Idaho School Counseling Model* encourages professional school counselors to become catalysts for educational change and to seek leadership roles in educational reform.

Professional school counselors are uniquely educated to:

- Coordinate the objectives, strategies and activities of a developmental school counseling program.
- Advocate for students as the students strive to meet the challenges of school and prepare for transition after high school.
- Promote a culture of academic success.
- Utilize data to identify patterns of achievement and behaviors affecting student success.
- Provide leadership to assess school needs, identify issues, and collaborate with others to develop solutions.

The *Idaho School Counseling Model* serves as an organizational tool to identify and prioritize the elements of a quality program. It describes the program components and serves as a framework for developing and writing a school counseling program. The *Idaho School Counseling Model* guides districts and individual schools in designing, developing, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive, developmental and systematic school counseling program.

Designs a Delivery System

The delivery system (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) describes activities, lessons and other areas in which professional school

counselors deliver the program, using the following four components:

- Curriculum provides a method by which every student receives school counseling content in a systematic way.
- Individual student planning provides all students with an opportunity to work closely with their parents or guardians to plan, monitor, and understand their growth and development and take action personally, educationally and occupationally.
- Responsive services address the direct, immediate concerns of students and include, but are not limited to: individual counseling, crisis counseling, referrals or consultations with parents or guardians, teachers or other specialists.
- Counseling program support enables the professional school counselor to be effective through leadership and advocacy, consultation, collaboration and teaming, program management and professional development.

Implemented by a Professional School Counselor

Professional school counselors in Idaho are certified through the Idaho State Department of Education and possess a master's degree in school counseling. In addition, state-certified counselors may earn a career counselor certification through the Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education. Although teaching experience is not required for certification in Idaho, it is important for professional school counselors to receive training in student learning styles, classroom behavior management, curriculum and instruction, student assessment and student achievement.

Conducted in Collaboration

Professional school counselors work collaboratively with parents or guardians, teachers and administrators, community members and other support services professionals as part of the student support services team. School psychologists, school

nurses, school social workers, and school resource officers are also part of an ideal student support system. Collaboration, often in the form of a student assistance team, helps students and their families identify student needs and refer them to appropriate resources both within and outside of the school.

Monitors Student Progress

Monitoring is the process of reviewing data to determine if a student or group of students is demonstrating the desired results as identified in the program standards. Professional school counselors consistently monitor and enhance academic progress and achievement, advocate for educational and career planning, and strive to remove barriers to learning and student achievement.

Uses Data

School counseling programs analyze data to create a picture of student needs and provide accountability to align the school

counseling program with the district and school's mission.

Seeks Improvement

School counseling programs receive valuable information from measuring program results. Professional school counselors can use this information to evaluate the program and make necessary improvements.

Seeks Systemic Change

Systemic change occurs when policies and procedures are examined and changed in the light of new data. Such change happens with the sustained involvement of all critical players in the school setting, including and often led by professional school counselors.

Shares Successes

Professional school counselors share their program successes to promote the value and necessity of the school counseling program.

A Cooperative Effort

Professional school counselors collaborate with stakeholders to ensure a quality school counseling program. Through this cooperative effort, school counseling programs become an integral part of the school mission.

Professional school counselors manage the school counseling program and utilize effective strategies to meet student standards. The professional school counselor provides leadership, which engages stakeholders in the delivery of activities and services to help students achieve success in school and life. Professional school counselors provide direct services to every student.

Teachers partner with professional school counselors, to develop and infuse

classroom guidance into the instructional program. This partnership is used to support student achievement.

Administrators provide support for the organization, development, and implementation of the school counseling program. Administrators encourage professional school counselors and teachers to collaborate, and provide time, facilities and resources to facilitate the process. Administrators support school personnel and community members in the implementation of the school counseling program.

Parents and guardians work in partnership with professional school counselors to help students be successful in school. Parents

and guardians serve on advisory committees.

Students are active participants in the school counseling program. Students take the lead in formulating effective plans to meet their academic and professional-technical, life and career, and personal and social goals.

Community members such as business, labor and community agencies partner with schools in a variety of ways (e.g. volunteering, mentoring, sites for student service and work-based learning). Community members serve on advisory committees.

(Adapted from Arizona Department of Education CCBG Program Model Handbook, 2002.)

Benefits of a School Counseling Program Based on the *Idaho School Counseling Model*

The *Idaho School Counseling Model*, like the *ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs*, provides a system that encourages and promotes academic and professional-technical development, life and career development, and personal and social development in preparation for the challenges of the 21st century. All stakeholders share the benefits of this organizational structure. School counseling programs have a positive impact on students, parents or guardians, teachers, administrators, boards of education, professional school counselors, counselor

educators, postsecondary institutions, and the community.

The following benefits have been updated from *The Idaho Comprehensive School Counseling Program Model* (2000), in coordination with *Sharing the Vision: National Standards for School Counseling Programs* (Dahir & Campbell, 1997) to reflect *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs*® (2005). A summary of the benefits can be found in the [Appendix pp. 91-92](#).

Benefits for Students

- ◆ Serves all students through school guidance curriculum.
- ◆ Monitors data to facilitate student improvement.
- ◆ Provides strategies for closing the achievement gap.
- ◆ Promotes a rigorous graduation plan for every student.
- ◆ Advocates for equitable access to educational opportunities.
- ◆ Supports skill development to increase student success.

Benefits for Parents or Guardians

- ◆ Provides advocacy support for their children's academic and professional-technical, life and career, and personal and social development.

- ◆ Supports partnerships in their children's learning, educational, and career planning.
- ◆ Facilitates access to school and community resources.
- ◆ Provides training and informational workshops.
- ◆ Connects to community- and school-based services.
- ◆ Provides data for information on student progress.
- ◆ Serves all students through school guidance curriculum.
- ◆ Recognizes that students have different needs.

Benefits for Teachers

- ◆ Promotes an interdisciplinary team approach to address student needs and educational goals.

- ◆ Increases collaboration between professional school counselors and teachers.
- ◆ Supports development of classroom-management skills.
- ◆ Provides a system for co-facilitation of classroom guidance curriculum.
- ◆ Supports the learning environment.
- ◆ Promotes teaming to increase student achievement.
- ◆ Analyzes data to improve school climate and student achievement.

Benefits for Administrators

- ◆ Aligns the school counseling program with the school's mission.
- ◆ Provides a school counseling program promoting student success.
- ◆ Monitors data for school improvement.
- ◆ Provides a system for managing a school counseling program.
- ◆ Articulates a process for evaluating a school counseling program.
- ◆ Uses data to jointly develop school counseling goals and professional school counselor responsibilities.
- ◆ Provides useful data for grant applications and funding sources.
- ◆ Provides a school counseling curriculum addressing the students' needs and enhancing school climate.

Benefits for the Boards and Departments of Education

- ◆ Provides a rationale for implementing a school counseling program.
- ◆ Facilitates equity and access to a quality school counseling program for every student.
- ◆ Demonstrates the need for funding.
- ◆ Articulates appropriate certification and national staffing ratios.
- ◆ Informs the community about school counseling program success.
- ◆ Supports standards-based programs.
- ◆ Provides data about improved student achievement.

Benefits for School Counselors

- ◆ Defines responsibilities within the context of a school counseling program.
- ◆ Integrates professional school counselors into the educational process for improving student achievement.
- ◆ Eliminates non-school-counseling program activities.
- ◆ Supports access to every student.
- ◆ Provides a tool for program development, coordination, implementation, management, and accountability.
- ◆ Recognizes school counselors as leaders and advocates.
- ◆ Ensures the school counseling program's contribution to the school's mission.

Benefits for Counselor Educators

- ◆ Builds collaboration between professional school counselor education programs and schools.
- ◆ Provides a framework for teaching a school counseling program model.
- ◆ Provides a model for site-based school counseling fieldwork or internships.
- ◆ Increases data collection for collaborative research on school counseling programs.
- ◆ Establishes a framework for professional development to benefit practicing professional school counselors.
- ◆ Promotes alliances with other educator training programs.

Benefits for Postsecondary Education

- ◆ Enhances transition of students to postsecondary institutions.
- ◆ Prepares every student for advanced educational and career opportunities.
- ◆ Motivates every student to seek a wide range of postsecondary options.
- ◆ Encourages and supports rigorous academic and professional-technical preparation.
- ◆ Promotes equity and access to postsecondary education for every student.

Benefits for Student Services Personnel

- ◆ Defines the school counseling program.
- ◆ Maximizes collaborative teaming to support individual student success.
- ◆ Uses school counseling program data to maximize benefits to individual student growth.
- ◆ Increases collaboration for utilizing school and community resources.

Benefits for Community: Business, Labor and Industry

- ◆ Increases opportunities for business, industry and labor to actively participate in the school counseling program.

- ◆ Builds collaboration, which enhances a student's postsecondary success.
- ◆ Connects business, industry and labor to students and families.
- ◆ Provides the conduit for business to articulate industry needs.
- ◆ Supports the academic and professional-technical preparation necessary for students' success in the workforce.